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ABSTRACT

As part of a symposium on issues related to diversity and American education reform in the context of Goal 3 of the National Education Goals, this paper addresses the diversity of Hispanic populations in the United States and implications for Goal 3. Seven factors to consider in program planning include the following: heterogeneity of the Hispanic populations and the diversity of needs; issues in the language of assessment; the role of the native language in content instruction; the nature of instruction and the quality of instructional personnel; the multicultural nature of the school environment; parental involvement and school-community relations; and the counseling/guidance function. It is suggested that native language testing, in spite of its effect on assessment problems, needs to be seriously considered, and native language instruction also deserves real attention. It is also noted that guidance counselors and other support personnel must ensure that Hispanics gain access to gifted and talented programs and that they familiarize students with suitable and productive postsecondary alternatives to a college education. (Contains 30 references.) (LB)

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THE EDUCATION OF HISPANIC AMERICANS

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It should be cause for celebration that the leadership of this nation has decided to embark upon an education strategy for the year 2000 that includes the six ambitious National Education Goals. By many accounts, the United States has been falling steadily behind the rest of the world in providing its citizens the kind of quality education expected from a global power. At a recent higher education conference, Dr. Lester Thurow, Dean of the Sloan School of Management at MIT, made an interesting recommendation. He suggested that if parents wanted their children to get the best overall education from kindergarten to the doctorate, they should send their children to a Japanese elementary school, a German secondary school, a British undergraduate college, and an American graduate school.

There was both good and bad news for America in Dr. Thurow's assessment. The good news is that the United States is still the uncontested world leader in graduate education, proof of which is the high number of foreign students who come to America to obtain their advanced degrees. The bad news is that American elementary and secondary education leaves a great deal to be desired. According to one report, "It is alarming that Americans' scientific literacy has decreased as our world has become more scientific and technological" (ERIC, 1991, p. 4). American students have not done much better in geography, ranking near the bottom in a recent international assessment of geographical knowledge (Salter, 1990). Under these circumstances, the work of the National Education Goals Panel is very welcome.

It is equally gratifying that the Center for Applied Linguistics has convened this symposium to focus on Goal 3 and its impact on minority populations. If the picture of American education is a bleak one, then the status of education among minorities in the United States is nothing short of tragic. We do not need to recite the litany of educational, economic, and social ills that affect United States minorities, since they are well known to groups like this one. One example about Hispanics should suffice to make the point. A Ford Foundation report (Díaz, 1984) indicates that Hispanics "form a seriously disadvantaged population" in terms of median income, employment, education, discrimination, alienation, and poverty levels (p. 6).

While we may applaud the efforts of government and school officials to improve the nation's school system, experience warns us to be watchful that **all** children participate in the benefits of such worthwhile initiatives. It is essential that educators, specialists, researchers, administrators, and policymakers who care about the educational plight of language and ethnic minority populations remain vigilant and contribute their talents, expertise, and influence to the task of bettering the education of these minority groups along with the education of the general population.

One constructive way to contribute to the efforts of the National Education Goals project, while at the same time looking after the interests of minority populations, is to formulate and bring to the attention of educators and policymakers guidelines that should be observed in designing interventions for the inclusion of minority populations. The specific objectives of Goal 3 make reference to various areas (National Education Goals Panel, 1991):

1. proportional representation of minorities in the educational progress experienced by elementary and secondary students in the major subject areas of English, math, science, history, and geography;

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2. improvement in cognitive skills, problem-solving strategies, application of knowledge, and effective communication;
3. development of good habits of citizenship, community service, and personal responsibility;
4. maintenance and development of bilingual capacity;
5. increased multiculturalism.

Nobody can deny that these are valid and noble objectives; advocates for the minority populations should be more than happy to collaborate in any effort that strives to realize these ends. At the same time it should be clear that a select group of education professionals like the one gathered here today can offer sound advice and assistance to educators, policymakers, and legislators as they attempt to provide equality of opportunity and quality of offerings to our minority populations, specifically Hispanic Americans.

It is safe to assume that the above objectives will be embedded in a series of programmatic options encompassing such areas as program models, assessment practices, curriculum models, teacher training programs, and counseling/guidance interventions. It is to be expected that various government entities at the local, state, and federal levels will participate in these efforts. To them and to the national panel we should direct the following observations to guide the implementation of progressive educational initiatives.

I have divided my presentation in two parts. In the first part I will make various points regarding the diversity of Hispanic populations in the United States, the assessment of their needs and progress, instructional language concerns, curricular and staffing needs, school environment, parental involvement, and counseling. In the second part I will address the implications of these issues for the realization of Goal 3 of the National Education Goals.

Factors to Consider in Program Planning

Diversity of Hispanics

When majority groups seek to serve Hispanics, there is a natural tendency to attempt to identify the Hispanic population by first dividing the universe into minority and non-minority camps, then subdividing the non-minority sector into Hispanics and non-Hispanics and finally isolating the Hispanics and proposing programs for them. Program planners should be reminded of the tremendous diversity that characterizes Hispanic populations and of the resulting diverse needs. To be sure, the great majority of Hispanics share a common language and, to a lesser extent, a common culture. But as Díaz (1984) emphasizes, each of the various Hispanic groups "has its own immigration and settlement history, its own current demographic and socio-economic status, its own perceptions of itself and of its place in United States society, and its own internal diversity" (p. 9). Awareness of this diversity may prevent program planners from defining the educational problems of Hispanics almost exclusively as language problems (Orfeld, 1986), and will help them realize that Hispanic professionals have a role to play outside of bilingual programs.

The diversity of Hispanics is reflected superficially in family names (the Kellys and Lewises of Panama, the Giboyeauxs of Puerto Rico, the Timmermans of Argentina), and less superficially in the rainbow of skin colors deriving from Caucasian, African, and Indian ancestries. There is also great numerical variation. The 1980 United States Bureau of the Census (1981) counted 14.6 million Hispanics on the United States mainland, and identified 60 percent of them as Mexican American, 14 percent as Puerto Ricans, 6 percent as Cubans, and 20 percent as other Hispanic. Unfortunately, these numbers are derived from self-identification; they do not include the 3 million resi-

dents of the island of Puerto Rico, who would put Puerto Ricans in second place ahead of the "other Hispanics" category, or the many uncounted Latinos who would be likely to swell the final count to nearly 20 million (Diaz, 1984).

There are other elements of this Hispanic diversity which are more critical to the endeavors of the Goals Panel. Orfeld (1986) reminds us that the Hispanic/Latino/Spanish/Latin American umbrella "includes people from numerous and very different national backgrounds: new immigrants from rural villages to those who have had families in the United States for generations, those who live in poverty in the barrios to those who have intermarried and live in the suburbs, and from monolingual Spanish speakers to those who never learned Spanish" (p. 3).

These variations in degree of bilingualism and biculturalism, in degree and quality of prior schooling, in socio-economic status, and in age of arrival in the United States can have a significant impact on the kind of programmatic intervention that may be recommended for the improvement of the educational status of Hispanics in this nation. Much has been made of the image of a first grader sitting helpless in a class full of incomprehensible (English) input, but there are also large numbers of other Hispanic students from urban areas who have a decent command of English and still have serious educational problems. Such a scenario led three Hispanic educators to address the plight of "the Hispanic child who speaks no Spanish—who may, in fact, be discouraged from learning the language by parents who mistakenly feel they are helping the child make a quicker transition to the dominant culture." Entitled *Educating the English-speaking Hispanics* (Valverde, Castro-Feinberg, & Márquez, 1980), this volume is an attempt to address the needs of one neglected element of the existing diversity among Hispanic groups.

Language of Assessment

Assessment is a very important component of any planned change and crucial in the educational field. In the context of the education of Hispanic populations, there are dual concerns about assessment: what to assess and through which language vehicle. Perhaps native language assessment is more controversial and more misunderstood than English language assessment, but each type of assessment brings with it particular problems and concerns.

Theoretical aspects of assessment, such as the quality and availability of tests, test administration, and cultural bias will not be discussed here. These and other technical issues have been covered in detail in recent articles by De Avila (1990) and Baca (1990). Instead I would like to review some caveats about the assessment of English language proficiency and of academic progress through English, and to suggest a broader role for native language assessment.

Probably the most troublesome aspect of second language assessment of Hispanics is how to assess English language proficiency for purposes of identification (selection), placement (entry), treatment (instruction), and reassignment (exit), and how to correlate measures of English language proficiency (or its components) with academic progress. Planners must be apprised about the complexity of language proficiency; they should be cautioned to avoid the pitfall of equating success in one very visible aspect of English language proficiency (namely oral fluency) with the totality of language competence, and should be advised not to further assume that a Hispanic student who tests well in English oral proficiency is ready to do academic work in English.

As Cummins (1984) points out, command of simple communicative skill does not imply educational sufficiency. De George (1988) reminds us that oral skills

alone may not be sufficient for a student to acquire content-area knowledge, and O'Malley (1989) sees a need for assessors to "shift from identifying isolated language skills to gaining a broader understanding of a student's ability to convey meaningful utterances through speech and writing."

Native language testing, though it may give rise to additional assessment problems, needs to be seriously considered by program planners.

Native language testing, though it may give rise to additional assessment problems, needs to be seriously considered by program planners. In the first place, one of the objectives of Goal 3 involves the development of bilingual capacity, which in the case of many Hispanics is half present at the outset in the form of Spanish or English monolingualism. Secondly, native language testing can be utilized to identify those Hispanic students eligible for gifted and talented programs who are currently not participating because of misguided notions that giftedness cannot occur in the absence of English language proficiency. As Melesky (1985) strongly suggests, "Spanish and Spanish—language evaluative materials must be made available during the identification; so too should the child's preferred language be used in resource room activities" (p. 51).

Native language testing for such purposes would be consonant with another Goal 3 objective which seeks proportional representation of minorities in successful educational endeavors. If the National Education Goals initiative seeks to encourage Hispanic students to make significant progress in math, science, history, and geography, it stands to reason that bilingual education programs will be one of the vehicles to achieve this aim. In such a case, it is pedagogically wise to assess academic achievement through the students' native language.

School districts should be more amenable to testing Hispanics in their native language for other reasons. It is essential that schools know, once they have determined that a Hispanic student is "PEP-py" (potentially English proficient), what his other strengths and weaknesses might be. There is a tendency to see LEP kids as having some sort of disease—LEPness—that incapacitates them to do anything else until their command of English improves. A child who is literate in his own language, who has received a decent education in his native country, or comes from a family with traditional educational values, should be treated differently programmatically from a student whose PEPness is just one of many educational problems.

We must help educators to overcome their objections to using Spanish for assessment purposes; to combat their claims that "Spanish assessment is too expensive," that "we don't have the personnel," that "we don't have the instruments," that "it promotes laziness," that "this is America!" In view of the fact that part of Goal 3 involves increased second language competence for all students, giving Hispanics a chance to show how much they know and can do through Spanish seems eminently fair and just. Unfortunately, few states currently require assessment of home language proficiency. Fradd and Tikunoff (1987) cite a recent Development Associates survey indicating that only about two percent of the reporting districts use data on home language proficiency to determine student eligibility for special services.

Language of Instruction

With the emphasis of the Goals Panel on content acquisition in math, science, and other subjects, instruction through the students' native language deserves serious consideration. Whether this instruction is part of an extensive bilingual program or is offered electively in schools with substantial Hispanic populations is not the main issue. A good argument

Instruction through the students' native language deserves serious consideration.

can be made—as is made regularly to support the advantages of transitional bilingual education programs—that students can continue to make progress academically in subject matter through the native language while they learn English via an established English as a second language (ESL) program.

Undoubtedly, these Spanish courses must be carefully designed and coordinated with the mainstream curriculum, and must be staffed by well-trained and credentialed professionals. It is unfortunate that oftentimes the preparation of non-English teaching personnel is not given the careful scrutiny afforded to the training of personnel who teach in English, with predictable consequences. It is distressing to see that aides are predominantly assigned the task of teaching in Spanish, while licensed teachers are placed in the English-language portion of the curriculum.

I have visited a number of bilingual classrooms in various states, and have discovered that the "bilingual" teacher is not always fluent in the students' native language. It is imperative that the teacher charged with imparting content to the students in the native language be fully competent in Spanish and also be knowledgeable about the subject matter being taught. Otherwise this type of instruction will not be equivalent in quality to the instruction imparted through English and will contribute to the further erosion of the credibility of bilingual education.

Bilingual and ESL professionals have a responsibility to ensure that the issue of language of instruction is handled with total candor. I have spoken to a number of public school teachers who are disturbed by the practice of assigning children to bilingual classrooms or programs to be taught primarily in Spanish when these children are in fact English dominant and the program cannot properly address their needs. Decisions about student placement should be made primarily on educational grounds, not on the basis of politics or extraneous policy. Ultimately, what is important to recognize is that bilingual education must play a crucial role in the fulfillment of Goal 3. The quality of the bilingual instruction, especially of the native language component, will influence the eventual educational outcomes of the treatment.

Nature of Instruction

While I counsel my students in a teacher education course not to take their roles as **teachers** too seriously—meaning that a good teacher knows the limits of her power and influence—we cannot deny that teachers play an important role—negative or positive—in the academic and personal progress of our students.

One of the first considerations in planning educational programs for Hispanic students is the quality of the personnel that is assigned to teach these students. We need to ask ourselves the following questions:

1. How many mainstream teachers have been trained to work with language and cultural minorities?
2. How many teachers consign the students to the back of the room to fend for themselves because the teachers don't know what else to do with them?
3. How many other teachers—not necessarily bad teachers—are working with Hispanics without having had a **single course** or workshop on learning styles, crosscultural communication, a foreign language, learning strategies, or cooperative learning?
4. How many teachers are reassigned to teach in the ESL or bilingual program because the district doesn't have any other assignment for them or wants to

move them out of another position where they are not doing so well?

5. How many teachers have been put to work with Hispanics because they like them, admire them, respect them, and want to help them succeed?

It is not fair to provide moral and fiscal support for "foreign" language education, but to tell Hispanic kids to look to the home and family for preservation of their ethnic heritage.

Those who work with Hispanics should come with the proper attitude and training or be retooled or reassigned. Unfortunately, the teacher preparation picture has not been very rosy for at least a decade when it comes to teachers of LEP students. From their analysis of the findings from the 1980-81 Teachers Language Skills Survey (TLSS), Waggoner and O'Malley (1985) concluded that a substantial portion (345,000) of the 504,000 teachers who by their own report have LEP students in their classrooms were not "using a non-English language or ESL with their LEP students" (p. 41).

Teachers of Hispanic students, whether ESL/bilingual specialists or mainstream teachers, should be reminded that Hispanic students are the responsibility of the **whole** school system, not just of the bilingual/ESL staff. This means that every teacher is a teacher of language and every teacher is a teacher of content. The implications are that ESL teachers must be made aware of new pedagogical developments such as teaching language through content (Mohan, 1990; Valdez-Pierce, 1987), while mainstream teachers should be shown how to incorporate language development into subject matter teaching (Hamayan, 1990; Secada, 1989).

Hamayan (1990) has identified three important roles that mainstream teachers need to play with their PEP students, and suggests that teacher training should prepare them to play these roles: mediator and facilitator of learning; facilitator in the acquisition of ESL skills, particularly the CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) variety; and proficient model of authentic comprehensible input outside the classroom. Secada (1989) has proposed two approaches for teaching LEP students academic skills in mathematics—Cognitively Guided Instruction and Active Mathematics Teaching. Hamayan and Perlman (1990) have prepared a guide specifically aimed at mainstream teachers who want to be especially helpful to language minority students about to be mainstreamed into the all-English classroom. The guide contains a list of the predominant language functions required in content areas such as science, math, and social studies and provides sample assessment instruments to measure these functions.

Specialists (particularly ESL instructors) need to be trained to impart content in their classes, to teach language through content. Advances in second language acquisition, particularly the results of the Canadian immersion studies (Swain, 1987), suggest that the grammatical syllabus has little pedagogical validity, and that the ESL teacher should rely on situational, communicative, and notional contexts. Another important role that bilingual/ESL specialists can fulfill is that of maintaining collaborative and coordinating relationships with mainstream teachers, who are likely to require assistance in addressing the language and content needs of their language minority students.

If, as the objectives of the National Education Goals propose, our Hispanic students are to learn to use their minds well and be prepared for further learning,

their education must consist of something other than content and basic skills. It is essential that our students be familiarized with learning strategies because, as Stewner-Manzanares and others (1985) indicate, "Learning strategies are important for effective learning, [learning] strategies can be taught, and students taught how to use them will learn more effectively and will apply them in other language situations outside the classroom" (p. 1).

School Environment

One of the objectives of Goal 3 is to help the student become "knowledgeable about the diverse cultural heritage of his nation and about the world community." An appropriate question to ask is: how multicultural is the school environment and the curriculum? A multicultural environment begins with the population and the physical setting but should not end there. Ideally, the classrooms will reflect a multiplicity of faces, colors, and ethnicities not only among the students but also among the staff. The buildings themselves will be adorned with evidence of multiculturalness in posters, paintings, famous figures, signs, maps, and menus.

Equally important, the curriculum will reflect the physical aspects of multiculturality in foreign language options, music, physical education, math, social studies, history, and literature offerings. If a building has a preponderance of students from one ethnic group, efforts should be made to highlight the language and culture of that group by encouraging its members to actively preserve their cultural heritage. It is important not to give the impression that it is all right for mainstream students to acquire an additional language and culture with the blessings of the educational establishment but that it isn't equally acceptable for language minority students to do likewise, again with the blessing of the school authorities. It is not fair to provide moral and fiscal support for "foreign" language education, but to tell Hispanic kids to look to the home and family for preservation of their ethnic heritage.

If any significant progress is to occur at the national level with regard to minority populations—Hispanic or others—the Goals Panel must counter the attacks on bilingual and multicultural education from entities such as U.S. English and from figures such as Arthur Schlesinger who attribute a "disuniting" influence to efforts to multiculturalize the curriculum, the schools, and the nation. Lip service and half-way measures will not work. What is needed are comprehensive initiatives that involve more than classrooms or programs, but whole schools, and which are not "showcase" examples limited to affluent neighborhoods and populations.

One excellent attempt to design an entire school with the objectives of the Goals Panel in mind was recently undertaken by the Yonkers, NY Board of Education, with the creation of the Eugenio Maria de Hostos Micro-Society School (Fedarko, 1992). Located in a low-income, working-class neighborhood in the Riverdale section of Yonkers, the Micro-Society School is one of only four such units in the United States. What is unique about Hostos is that it attempts to mirror the society architecturally, politically, economically, technologically, socially, and educationally. The school contains student-run learning centers that include a bank/loan center, courtroom, publishing center, government seat, telecommunication center, and a market place.

These structural amenities are not mere showcases. In keeping with the spirit of the school, students have developed their own constitution, government, and monetary system. They are given the opportunity to hold jobs, earn "money," pay taxes, and purchase goods and services. The school's primary goal is to teach the basics, to impart higher level thinking skills

and problem-solving techniques, and to prepare students to participate fully in a multicultural society. In keeping with this aim, all students are expected to acquire a second language, and language instruction in Spanish and English begins at the pre-K level.

Although the school is too young to have instituted measures of progress, the experiment has great potential for success and emulation. It has all the characteristics of effective programs for language minorities: well designed and heavily supported, easily accessible, attractive, staffed with competent and caring personnel, innovative, and reflective of the needs of the target population. The Goals Panel should be urged to recommend this type of initiative around the rest of the country.

Everyone does not have to end up in college to be a successful product of the educational system, so long as all those who *want to and are able to* make it in college are given the opportunity. What is important is to have viable alternatives for those who choose not to go to college.

Degree of Parental Involvement

Some people who subscribe to the notion that effective schools need to have a vital parental involvement apparatus in place begin to see only obstacles when it comes to Hispanic parental involvement: many Hispanic parents don't care about the education of their children; it's almost impossible to get them to participate; since they don't know enough English they don't benefit from activities when they do come; they can't be much help to their children academically because their English is not good enough.

We need to raise consciousness among educators and disabuse them of these notions. Yes, there are parents who fit the above profile, but they are the minority. Hispanic parents, like most other parents, care very much about the education of their children (Orfeld, 1986). What they need in many instances is first to be welcomed by the schools as potential partners, to be helped to become more familiar with the school system where they reside, to be given negotiating skills to manipulate the system to their children's benefit, and to be assisted to work with the teachers in helping the students progress academically (Adorno de Santiago, 1991).

Violand-Sánchez, et al. (1991, pp. 2-3) provide a list of five categories of parental involvement which schools can promote and for which they can provide assistance: providing for children's basic needs, communicating with school staff, volunteering or providing assistance at their child's school, supporting and participating in learning activities with their children at home, and participating in governance and advocacy activities. Adorno de Santiago (1991, p. 17) developed a simple eight-question "PIAQ" (Parental Involvement Attitudinal Quotient) for teachers and school administrators to plumb their attitudes about parents and parental involvement.

One role that neither teachers nor school officials should play is to tell the parents not to use the native language at home, particularly if the parents don't speak enough English. The danger inherent in this type of advice is that it may interfere with family communication. There are a number of things that parents—LEP or fluent in English—can do at home to improve their children's academic performance and comfort in school. They can keep in touch with the child about assignments and other school obligations; they can try to maintain a suitable home environment

for the child to do his homework; and they can establish homework schedules, ask to see the finished products, and show the child that his parents value reading and writing by engaging in these activities with or in front of the child.

Nature of Counseling/Guidance

The counseling/guidance function should not be the sole responsibility of the counselors; the whole school must get involved. The first obligation of the counseling function is to believe in the students' potential and avoid tracking. For too long, language minority students have been written off early in their education; they haven't received the moral and educational support given to many non-minorities. Hispanics tend to be underrepresented in gifted and talented groups, often because their incomplete command of English is equated with inability to perform above average norms. Melesky (1985) questions some definitions of giftedness and discusses three methods of selecting potentially gifted Hispanic children.

At the other end of the scale, those working in the counseling function need to be courageous in recognizing that everyone does not have to end up in college to be a successful product of the educational system, so long as all those who **want to and are able to** make it in college are given the opportunity. What is important is to have viable alternatives for those who choose not to go to college. Postsecondary education includes terminal associate degrees and career training in good vocational schools. In Lancaster, PA and Rio Piedras, PR, for example, each county vocational school has a reputation for excellence, and the size of the waiting list provides eloquent testimony that there are acceptable alternatives to a college education. A speaker at a recent conference pointed to the quality of postsecondary education in Germany, where parents boast their good fortune if their children get into one of the apprenticeship programs.

Summary and Conclusions

In this paper I have identified seven factors to be taken into consideration by program planners seeking to devise educational initiatives for Hispanic populations in the context of Goal 3 of the National Education Goals. These factors are:

1. the heterogeneity of the Hispanic populations and the diversity of needs
2. issues in the language of assessment
3. the role of the native language in content instruction
4. the nature of instruction and the quality of instructional personnel
5. the multicultural nature of the school environment
6. parental involvement and school-community relations
7. the counseling/guidance function

Program planners are reminded that the Hispanic population has a great deal of variety in makeup and needs, and that effective programs must respond to this diversity of needs. Secondly, while the educational problems of Hispanics are not all due to language, Spanish does play a crucial role in any type of intervention, both in assessment and instruction. Thirdly, bilingual education continues to be a viable option for promoting the academic progress of Hispanics, in partnership with good language development programs in ESL. The use of Spanish both as a subject and a vehicle for content instruction is highly recommended.

I have stressed the need for qualified personnel, well trained, credentialed, and sensitive. I have indicated that a sound staff development policy will address the needs of both specialists and mainstream teachers, and will focus on new developments in content area instruction, language strategies, and learning styles (Violand Hainer, et al., 1990), among others.

It has been suggested that program planners need to go beyond classroom components and educational programs and focus on whole school buildings that reflect a multilingual, multicultural environment. The Hostos Micro-Society School in Yonkers, NY was held up as an example of the kind of initiative that holds promise for the educational progress of Hispanics, both because it is a well-planned experiment and because it takes place in the midst of a representative community.

Parental involvement and the counseling/guidance function were also discussed. The point was made that teachers and school officials must shed any misconceptions about Hispanic parental apathy toward the education of their children, must make the parents feel welcome in the schools, and should give the parents the skills to work within the system. With respect to counseling, guidance counselors and other support personnel have two essential tasks to perform: to ensure that Hispanics gain access to all opportunities for educational advancement, particularly to gifted and talented programs; and to familiarize students with suitable and productive postsecondary alternatives to a college education.

The National Education Goals Panel has a very ambitious task before it. It is hoped that Hispanics will be given the chance to share in the educational bounty; it is further hoped that program planners will have the opportunity to examine the outcome of the Center for Applied Linguistics Symposium on Goal 3 to guide their deliberations.

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